

ATARI 7800™ Game Manual



Balblaster—the simplest, fastest and most competitive sport in the known universe! It goes from slack rope to swing of all games among every lifeform within range of interstellar broadcast. In exactly three minutes, Balblaster can make you a hero—or destroy a lifetime of dreams.

The year is 3027, and the place is a multi-gravity room and space in the binary star system of Balblaster and Balblaster. Minutes from now, on the luminous surface of an artificial asteroid, the final round of the interstellar Balblaster Championship—the greatest tournament of all time and space—will begin, and history will be made. For the first time a creature from the planet Earth has battled through the countless qualifying rounds and eliminations, chartering and then strengthening, across past patrols, to win the right to compete for Earth's honor and the ultimate title: any being can possess: Masterblaster.

The final round is about to begin and the competitor from Earth is YOU!

Getting Started

As a young tyro, you were required to master the Balblaster prep procedure before you were allowed to go into competition. You perform this procedure now, modifying your equipment, setting the game length, and sizing up your opponents.

1. Connect your controls. For one player, plug a joystick into the left controller port. For two players, plug a second joystick into the right controller port. Player 1 (left joystick) plays the upper screen; player 2 (right joystick) plays the lower screen.
2. Gently the robotic hand the Balblaster cartridge into the cartridge slot.
3. Turn on all systems. Switch on your TV, then press the [Power] key to turn on the

Three Minutes, Two

console. Demonstration play automatically begins. Each player (combination of human and droid) is demonstrated at random for one minute.

4. To play the regulation two-player (two-human) three-minute game, press the left joystick's fire button. To select other player and game length combinations, press [Select]. The designation for player 1 will flash. Move your joystick up and down to choose the HUMAN or a DROID level. Droid is the most skilled of the computer-controlled opponents, and Droid 1 is the least skilled. Typically (you would invert player 1 as HUMAN), for yourself.

Move your joystick to the right to select game length. The numbers at the center

of the band will flash. Move your joystick up and down to choose from one- to nine-minute games.

5. Press [Select] again to watch random demonstrations for one minute.
6. Press the left joystick's fire button to start the game.
7. Press [Select] at any time to restart the game with the same options you previously selected.
8. During play, press [Pause] to pause a game; press it again to resume play.

Players, One Victor!

Playing the Game

Before boarding your Rotochair, you take a moment to look over one of the most beautiful and exciting sights in the universe: the Grid (the Rotochair playing field). Ah, the Grid—123 squares surrounded by an Electroboundary that keeps players and ball within bounds. Soon it'll be you out there racing after the Plasmorb, Etherneting for all the universe to see. Right now the pair of Doublebeans at the ends of the Grid look like an easy shot, but when the game starts they begin moving at 3 meters per second and the distance between them shrinks.

You sense the action as the "Song of the Grid" plays through the headphones in your helmets. The song, created from the musical contributions of Massachusetts of old, sets the pace for the game by capturing the urgency and thrill of the action. Melodizing on, it sharpens your competitive edge and excites the fans to a frenzy.

As you strap yourself into your Rotochair you refer to yourself the basic rules of the game as you learned them from the official Interstellar Rotochair Competition Handbook:

"Each player must compete in a regulation Rotochair. These Rotochairs, designed after cruisers used in intergalactic space dogfights, travel at speeds of up to 50 meters per second. Each Rotochair must be qualified with the following:

- A joystick control for navigating the Grid and blasting the Plasmorb. To navigate, the player moves the handle in the direction of intended travel. If in possession of the Plasmorb, the player presses the fire button to activate the Plasmorb and launch the Plasmorb.
- A Rotochair computer that automatically raises (or lowers)

- the Roasted 90 degrees to face the Razzmataz (or the Goal-beams if the player already has the Razzmataz)
- A forcefield that completely surrounds the Razzmataz. When training without the Razzmataz, the forcefield is a Bumperfield that prevents collisions with other objects. When a player is within a few inches of the Razzmataz, the forcefield becomes a Pullfield that automatically captures the ball and moves it towards the goal. When a player in possession of the Razzmataz presses the fire button, the forcefield becomes a Pushfield that launches the ball

The game officially begins when the timer starts. Players begin by moving downfield until they locate the Razzmataz and attempt to capture it.

Players score points each time they blast the Razzmataz between the Goalbeams. To score maximum points, players blast the Razzmataz between Goalbeams that have disappeared over the horizon on the opposite end of the Grid. This is called an *Over-the-Horizon (OTH) shot*.

"A player may attempt to steal the Razzmataz by running up beside the opponent, blasting the Razzmataz away, and going after it."

Strategy

As you moved up through the elimination games you caught the attention of the famous Masterblazer Arboster Kipling. Arboster was so impressed with your steady nerves, timing, and devotion to the game he decided to personally supervise your advanced training. In the last training session before the Championship he gave you his most valuable tips:

"Listen kid, you're pretty good for a human. You've got a real shot at the title if you keep in mind a few little tricks.

"First, try to make your goals early in the game before the distance between the Goalbeams begins to shrink.

"Your OTH Shots will be more successful if you take aim and blast the ball just before the Goalbeams disappear over the horizon.

"Sometimes you might find yourself too close to the Electro-boundary for a high-scoring OTH Shot. If you do, just blast yourself backwards and catch the ball on the rebound.

"To shake off an opponent who's tailing you closely for the ball, make sure the opponent's Rotofoil is directly behind you, then blast the Plasmorb. The force will send your opponent

backwards and the ball ahead so you can get to it first.

"Here's a real classic—the block. Simply position yourself between the Plasmorb and the Goalbeams. This will block all but the trickiest angle shots.

"I guess you're thanking me now for all the practice I put you through. Of course, you got the most out of every practice session by shooting at the Electroboundary just outside the Goalbeams. That way you got in a lot of shots without going through the whole goal-scoring sequence.

"And all those Droid demo games I made you watch gave you a chance to study technique, especially Plasmorb stealing. You've got it down now, getting in real close until the buzz of your opponent's Rotofoil is loudest and you have the power to blast the Plasmorb as far as possible. We pros call it 'maxing the buzz.'

"Oh, and don't let the Rotosnaps disorient you. Listen for the snap when you rotate so you can keep your sense of direction.

"Let's see. Anything else? Oh yeah. Nobody ever scored any points by sitting still. Keep moving!

"Well, I guess that's it. When it's all over I hope it's the other guy's Rotofoil I see spinning out in defeat. Go get 'em, kid."

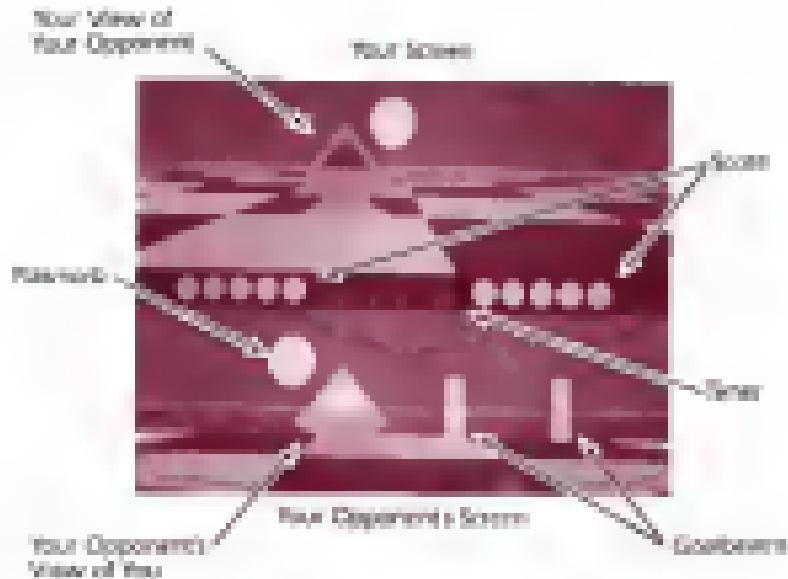
Viewing Game Action

New users sometimes ask for pointers on viewing the action. The Interactive Battersup Competition Program includes the following information on viewing the game:

"In the following illustration, two players in RotoBall are facing each other. In the top screen, you are looking out of

the cockpit window at your opponent's RotoBall and the ball.

"In the bottom screen, your opponent is looking out at your RotoBall, the Pitmark, and the Goalbeams. Your opponent has the ball and is heading toward the goal, but you are blocking the line of fire. Your opponent has three points, and you have seven. There are two minutes and 11.5 seconds left in the game."



Scoring

The official indoor Foosball Competition Handbook contains the following about scoring:

"A player scores by blowing the Foosmorb between the Goalposts. Goals made when the Goalposts have disappeared behind the Return (10th) shot, score 3 points. Goals made closer to the Goalposts score 2 points. Close-in goals score 1 point.

"The total score (the combined points of both players) cannot exceed 10 points for each game.

"A player scoring 10 consecutive goals wins the game in a shutout. Otherwise, the player with the most points (scout circles filled in with a player's color) at the end of the game period wins. In the event of a tie the game goes into overtime and the next player to score wins.

"When all score circles are filled, a player can steal points by scoring more goals. For example, if Droidi scores the first 9 points and the Human scores the next 6 points, the Human wins 6 to 9."

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